**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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A Profile of the Educational Opportunity Centers Program: 1998–99

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CONTENTS

TABLES AND FIGURES

Tables

Figures

FOREWORD

To help ensure the full success of President Bush's education initiative, "No Child Left Behind," high-quality postsecondary educational opportunities must be available to all students. In keeping with this goal, the Federal TRIO Programs provide outreach and support to help low-income, first-generation college students progress through the academic pipeline from middle school to postbaccalaureate programs.

On behalf of the Office of Federal TRIO Programs, I am pleased to present this report, *A Profile of the Educational Opportunity Centers Program: 1998-99.* The goal of this TRIO Program is to increase the number of adults who enroll in postsecondary educational institutions.

This report is the first in a series of reports that present a national profile of the Educational Opportunity Centers, or EOC Program. Individual project reports, under separate cover, summarize specific information submitted by each EOC project and provide aggregate information on other EOC projects in the same federal region, the same institutional sector, and the nation. The 1998-99 performance report, submitted by the EOC projects, was the primary data source for both the national profile and individual project reports.

The Office of Federal TRIO Programs is proud to begin a systematic process for sharing with you national statistical information on the EOC Program. It is our hope that the collection and dissemination of this information will foster communication aimed at assessing our mission and implementing measures to see how well we are doing. We look forward to continuing to work together to improve program services and postsecondary enrollment rates for economically disadvantaged adults.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

HIGHLIGHTS

This report provides a comprehensive profile of the EOC Program using the 1998-99 performance report data. Complete performance reports were submitted by 95 percent of the projects (or 78 of 82 projects), serving a total of 152,344 participants. This report is intended to serve as a resource for the improvement of EOC services.

Below are highlights from the following sections of the report: demographics of project participants, services and activities, and performance outcomes.

Demographics of Project Participants

- Projects hosted by 4-year colleges served 39 percent of all EOC participants; community organizations, 37 percent; and 2-year colleges, 24 percent.

- Most EOC participants (85 percent) were new to the program, with only 15 percent continuing from a previous year.

- Seventy-one percent of participants met both the low-income and first-generation college eligibility requirements. Thirteen percent were first-generation only, 11 percent were low-income only, and the remaining 5 percent were other classifications.

- Forty-one percent of participants were white, 36 percent were black or African American, 14 percent were Hispanic and Latino, and 9 percent were of other races or ethnic groups.

- Most of all EOC participants (64 percent) were female.

- Forty-four percent of participants were ages 28 and older; 40 percent, 19 to 27 years old; and the remaining 16 percent, 14 to 18 years old.

- The largest percentage of participants (37 percent) were high school (or GED) graduates. Twenty-one percent were postsecondary students, 14 percent each were postsecondary or secondary school dropouts, and the remaining 13 percent were secondary school students.

Services and Activities

- Counseling services were offered by 80 percent of EOC projects. Other common services included academic advising (79 percent), referrals to other organizations (70 percent), and college orientation (67 percent).

- Sixty-two percent of all participants, including 80 percent of all adult participants, received counseling services.

- Of the remaining services, 44 percent of all EOC participants received academic advising; 32 percent, college orientation; and 29 percent, referrals to other organizations.

Performance Outcomes

- EOC projects assisted 69 percent of college-ready participants in applying for postsecondary admissions and 78 percent in applying for financial aid.

- Fifty-one percent of college-ready participants were admitted to a postsecondary institution, and 56 percent of participants who had dropped out of college reenrolled.

- Among those participants admitted to a postsecondary institution, 54 percent were admitted to a public 2-year college, 26 percent to a public 4-year college, 13 percent to a public or nonprofit vocational or technical school, and the remaining 8 percent to another type of educational institution.

I. INTRODUCTION

This report is the first in a series addressing the Educational Opportunity Centers (EOC) projects. The report is presented in two documents. The first piece, the national report, provides feedback from EOC projects on the status of EOC performance reporting and gives the overall results from all projects reporting. A second, companion document provides individual reports, which summarize data from each project.

The purpose of the reports is to share feedback and other information from the performance reports that EOC projects prepare each year. It is our hope that EOC projects can use the shared information to plan and improve their own services, which will increase educational opportunities for economically disadvantaged adults.

In both the national and individual project reports, we look at the data by type of host institution—4-year and 2-year postsecondary institutions and community organizations. We also present the reporting response rates by federal region.

Although EOC and Talent Search projects have a similar performance report form, these programs have different missions, participant characteristics, and services. To gather and present performance report information more fully for each of these programs, we have prepared separate but similar reports for both the EOC and Talent Search projects.

A. Background

In 1972, EOC became the fourth of the TRIO Programs. EOCs provide counseling and information on college admissions to qualified adults who want to enter or continue a program of postsecondary education. EOCs coordinate with nearby postsecondary institutions and engage in activities designed to involve and acquaint the local community with higher education. Participants must reside in the target area served by the EOC and be age 19 or older. However, if there is not a Talent Search project in the surrounding region, participants may be younger than 19.

In 1998-99 (FY 1998) new grant awards were made, increasing the number of EOC projects from 74 to 82. EOC projects are operated by 2- or 4-year colleges, public or private nonprofit agencies or organizations, or a combination of these sponsors. In each project, at least two-thirds of the participants must be both low-income and potential first-generation college students. Services provided by EOC projects include academic advice, personal counseling, career workshops, information on postsecondary educational opportunities, information on student financial assistance, assistance in completing applications for college admission, testing and financial aid, coordination with nearby postsecondary institutions, and media activities designed to involve and acquaint the community with higher education opportunities, tutoring, and mentoring.

It is helpful to place EOC in the context of the other direct service TRIO Programs—Upward Bound (UB), Upward Bound Math Science (UBMS), Talent Search (TS), Student Support Services (SSS), and Ronald E. McNair Baccalaureate Achievement Program (McNair). Table 1 gives the funding information and participant numbers for each of the direct service TRIO Programs in 1999-2000 (FY 1999). As shown, the 82 EOC projects serve more than 158,000 people each year at an average cost per person of $188 in 1999-2000.

Table 1.	TRIO funding, number of grants, number served, average grant award, amount per person served, and average number served: 1999					
1999	Program funding	Number of grants	Number served	Average grant award	Amount per person	Average number served
Educational Opportunity Centers	$29,794,380	82	158,063	$363,346	$188	1,928
Talent Search	$98,450,697	361	323,541	$272,717	$304	896
McNair	$32,114,068	156	3,734	$205,859	$8,600	24
Student Support Services	$178,916,836	796	178,099	$224,770	$1,005	224
Upward Bound	$220,500,637	772	52,960	$285,623	$4,164	69
Upward Bound Math Science	$29,276,284	124	6,200	$236,099	$4,722	50

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, 1999.

Table 2 gives TRIO funding levels in constant 1999 dollars. One can see from this table that funding for EOC has increased more than threefold in constant dollars since the program's inception.

Table 2.	TRIO funding levels in constant 1999 dollars (millions)					
Year	EOC	TS	UB	SSS	McNair	UBMS
1967	—	$12.4	$139.7	—	—	—
1970	—	21.5	127.1	$42.9	—	—
1975	$9.3	18.6	118.6	71.2	—	—
1980	15.6	30.9	126.4	121.3	—	—
1985	14.2	32.1	114.0	108.5	—	—
1990	15.2	34.5	128.2	115.9	$3.8	$4.3
1995	26.9	85.7	208.3	156.9	20.9	20.8
1999	29.8	98.5	220.5	178.9	32.1	29.3

Source: Calculated from information provided by U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, and the Consumer Price Index.

B. Performance report response

This report covers the 1998-99 reporting period, the first year that EOC projects used the new performance report form approved by the Office of Management and Budget in 1998. Aggregate performance reports covering Sections I-V on the performance report form were submitted by 95 percent of the projects in operation at the time (Table 3). These reports covered 152,344 participants in the reference year.

Sector	Total projects in 1998	Percentage of total EOC projects	Project response rate	Number of participants reported	Percentage distribution
4-year	40	49%	95%	58,931	39%
2-year*	23	28%	96%	36,516	24%
Community organizations	19	23%	95%	56,897	37%
All projects	82	100%	95%	152,344	100%

Table 3. **Number of EOC projects and participants reporting performance information, by type of host institution: 1998-99**

One respondent with a two-year college host provided activity and outcome data but did not provide demographic data.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, EOC Performance Reports, 1998-99.

Figure 1 and Table 4 give the percentage of project staff that reported by region. Six had 100 percent response rates (Regions I, III, IV, VIII, IX, and X). In Regions II, V, VI, and VII, one project did not complete all sections of the report.

Figure 1. **Performance report response rates by region: 1998-99**
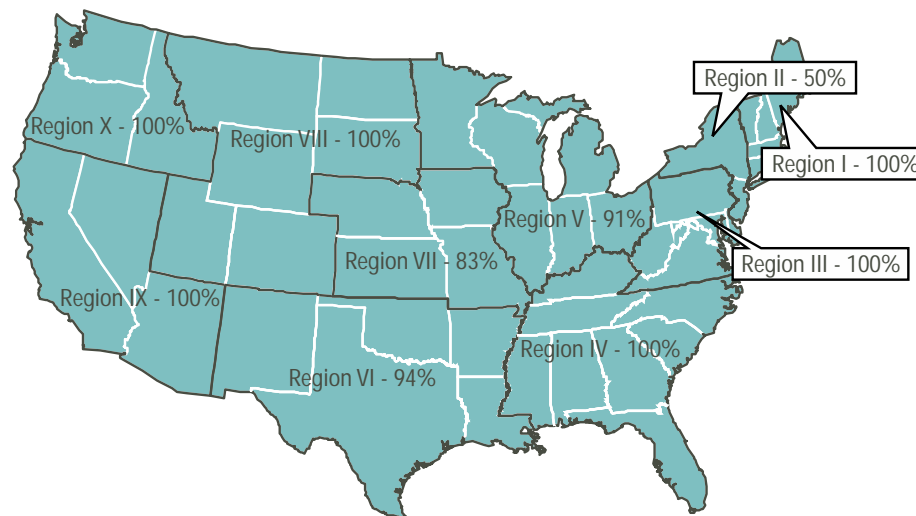
Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, EOC Performance Reports, 1998-99.

| Table 4. | Number of EOC projects and participants and percentage reporting performance information, by federal region: 1998-99 | | | | |

Federal region	Total projects in 1998	Project distribution	Number of participants	Number of projects reporting	Response rate
Region I (Boston)	5	6%	20,398	5	100%
Region II (New York)	2	2%	3,724	1	50%
Region III (Philadelphia)	10	12%	17,201	10	100%
Region IV (Atlanta)	17	21%	37,030	17	100%
Region V (Chicago)	11	13%	14,493	10	91%
Region VI (Dallas)	17	21%	26,601	16*	94%
Region VII (Kansas City)	6	7%	6,107	5	83%
Region VIII (Denver)	6	7%	13,434	6	100%
Region IX (San Francisco)	5	6%	8,464	5	100%
Region X (Seattle)	3	4%	4,892	3	100%
Total for nation	82	100%	152,344	78	95%

*One respondent from Region VI provided activity and outcome data but did not provide demographic data.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, EOC Performance Reports, 1998-99.

C. Structure of the report

The rest of this report is organized according to the structure of the performance report. Chapter II presents a demographic profile of EOC participants and target schools. Chapter III discusses the provision of project services. Chapter IV provides an analysis of performance outcomes, and Chapter V discusses data issues as well as plans for the future.

II. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF PROJECT PARTICIPANTS

This section summarizes the demographic information that was reported on the 1998-99 EOC performance reports. Statistics are given for EOC projects as a whole, as well as projects grouped by type of host institution, defined as 4-year colleges and universities, 2-year colleges, and community organizations.

A. Number of participants assisted

Seventy-eight of the 82 EOC projects operating during the 1998-99 reporting year provided valid demographic data. The 78 projects served a total of 152,344 participants, averaging 1,953 participants per project. The smallest of the projects served about 500 participants and the largest served more than 8,000. As Figure 2 shows, 39 percent of participants were served by projects based in 4-year colleges, 24 percent were served by projects at 2-year colleges, and another 37 percent were served by projects at community organizations.

Figure 2.   **Participant distribution by type of host institution**
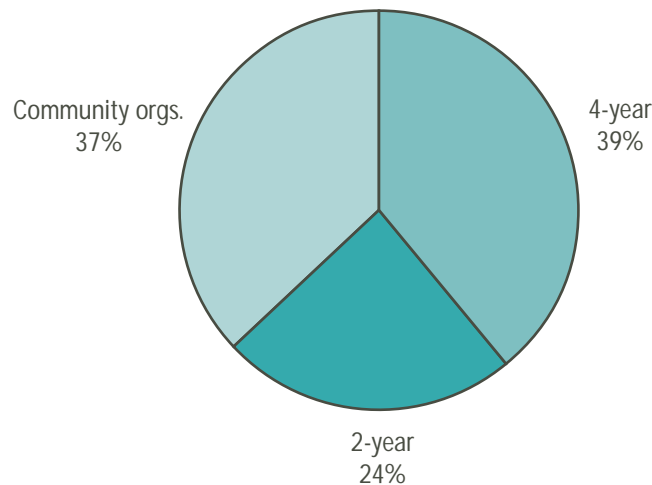
Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, EOC Performance Reports, 1998-99.

Most of the participants (85 percent) in the 1998-99 program year were new, while 15 percent were continuing participants from the previous year. The percentage of new participants was greatest (93 percent) among projects in the community organization sector. In the 2-year college sector, 82 percent were new participants and in the 4-year college sector, 79 percent were new (Figure 3).

Figure 3.   **Participant distribution by status and type of host institution**

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, EOC Performance Reports, 1998-99.

B.   Participant distribution by eligibility

Over two-thirds of all EOC participants met both eligibility criteria: they were low-income[1] participants and potential first-generation college[2] students (Figure 4). Eleven percent met only the low-income criterion; another 13 percent met only the first-generation college requirement. In addition, 5 percent of participants had other areas of need. Regulations require that two-thirds of project participants each year meet both eligibility criteria.

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[1]A low-income participant is one whose family's income was less than 150 percent of the poverty level amount. The U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, sets guidelines to determine the definition of poverty level.

[2]A potential first-generation college student is an individual whose parents or guardians did not receive a baccalaureate degree.

Figure 4.   **Participant distribution by eligibility**
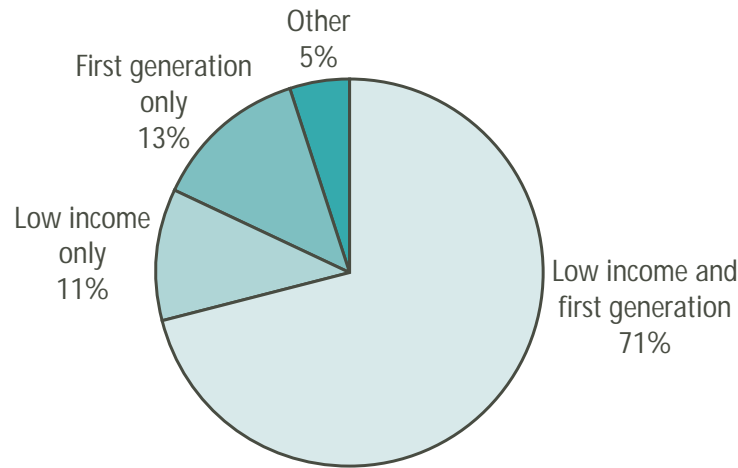
Other
5%

First generation
only
13%

Low income
only
11%

Low income and
first generation
71%

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, EOC Performance Reports, 1998-99.

As Table 5 shows, there is very little variation across the sectors in the distribution of participants by eligibility status.

Table 5.   **Participant distribution by eligibility and type of host institution**

Sector	Low income and first generation	Low income only	First generation only	Other
4-year colleges	73%	10%	13%	4%
2-year colleges	70%	12%	13%	5%
Community orgs.	72%	11%	12%	5%
All projects	72%	11%	13%	5%

Percentages do not total to 100 due to rounding.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, EOC Performance Reports, 1998-99.

C. Participant distribution by ethnic background

Figure 5 below shows that whites made up the largest ethnic group among EOC participants (41 percent). African Americans were the next largest group, representing 36 percent of the participants. Hispanic or Latino students were 14 percent of the participants, American Indians/Alaska Natives were 4 percent, Asians and multi-racial participants were 2 percent each, and Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders were 1 percent.
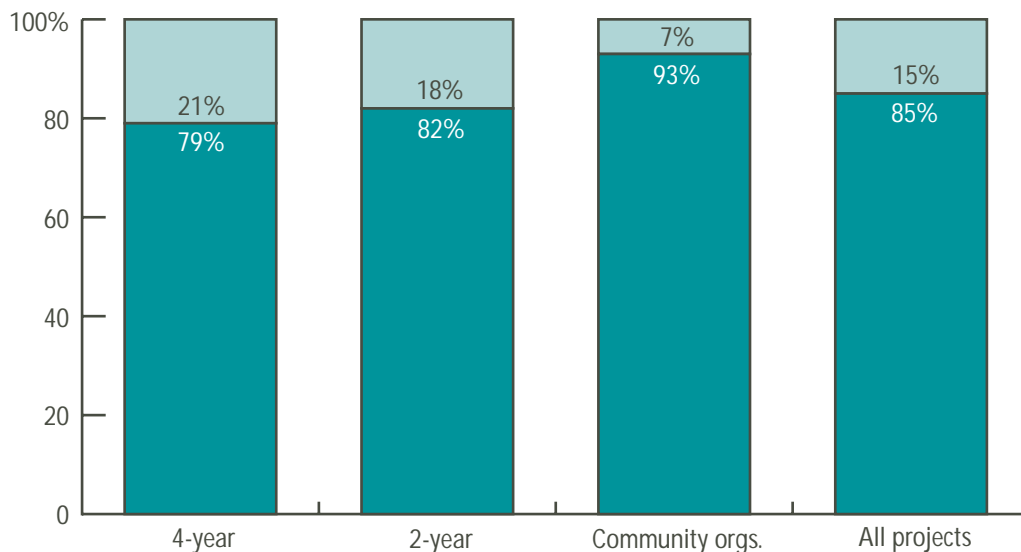
Figure 5.   **Participant distribution by ethnic background**
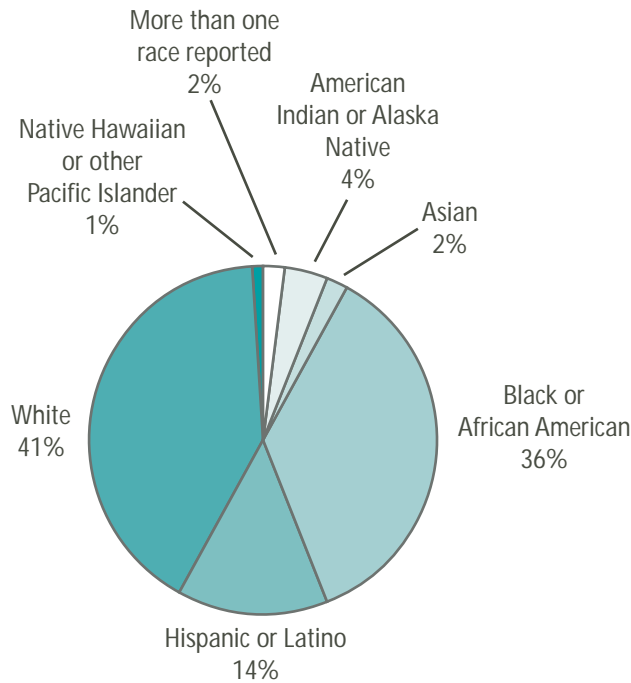
Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, EOC Performance Reports, 1998-99.

Table 6 presents the distribution of EOC participants by both ethnic background and type of host institution. We see slight variations in the ethnic distributions across sectors. For example, American Indians/Alaskan Natives constituted 6 percent of participants at projects hosted by 4-year colleges but only 2 percent at projects hosted by community organizations. In addition, African Americans made up 29 percent of the

Table 6.   **Participant distribution by ethnic background and type of host institution**

Sector	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Black or African American	Hispanic or Latino	White	Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	More than one race reported
4-year colleges	6%	1%	32%	15%	44%	0%	1%
2-year colleges	4%	3%	29%	16%	44%	2%	2%
Community orgs.	2%	2%	46%	12%	36%	0%	3%
All projects	4%	2%	36%	14%	41%	1%	2%

Percentages do not total 100 due to rounding.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, EOC Performance Reports, 1998-99.

participant population in the 2-year sector but were almost half of the population in the community organizations sector.

D. Participant distribution by gender

During the 1998-99 reporting period, 64 percent of EOC participants were female and 36 percent were male. In projects based in 4-year institutions, the percentage of females was also 64 percent. In the 2-year sector, the percentage of females was 67 percent, and in the community organizations sector, the percentage was 63 percent (Figure 6).

Figure 6. **Participant distribution by gender and type of host institution**

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, EOC Performance Reports, 1998-99.

E. Participant distribution by age

More than four-fifths (84 percent) of EOC participants were ages 19 or older (Figure 7). Only 16 percent were ages 14 to 18. Forty percent of participants were ages 19 to 27 and 44 percent were 28 or above.

At 4-year colleges and community organizations, slightly larger proportions of participants were in the youngest age range (Table 7). Twelve percent of participants at projects hosted by 2-year schools were 14 to 18 years old, whereas 19 percent of participants at 4-year schools and 16 percent in community organizations were in that age range. Eighty percent of participants in the 4-year sector were 19 years or older. Eight-eight percent in the 2-year sector and 84 percent in the community organizations sector were 19 or older.

Figure 7.   **Participant distribution by age**

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, EOC Performance Reports, 1998-99.

Table 7.   **Participant distribution by age and type of host institution**

Sector	14-18	19-27	28 and up	Unknown
4-year colleges	19%	38%	42%	1%
2-year colleges	12%	45%	43%	0%
Community orgs.	16%	39%	45%	0%
All projects	16%	40%	44%	0%

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, EOC Performance Reports, 1998-99.

F.   Participant distribution by grade level

As expected given the age distribution, only13 percent of EOC participants were attending high school during the 1998-99 school year (Figure 8). Thirty-seven per-cent had already graduated from high school or received their GED certificate (and were not attending school), 21 percent were attending college, and 28 percent had left high school or college without graduating.

As shown in Table 8, there are not large differences in grade-level distribution by type of host institution. The largest percentage of people served by all three types of host insti-tution was high school graduates who had not yet enrolled in postsecondary programs. However, projects hosted by 2-year and 4-year institutions were somewhat more likely to serve those who had graduated but not yet enrolled in postsecondary school (45 per-cent and 42 percent, respectively) than were projects hosted by community organizations (28 percent). Projects hosted by community organizations were somewhat more likely to

Figure 8.   **Participant distribution by grade level**
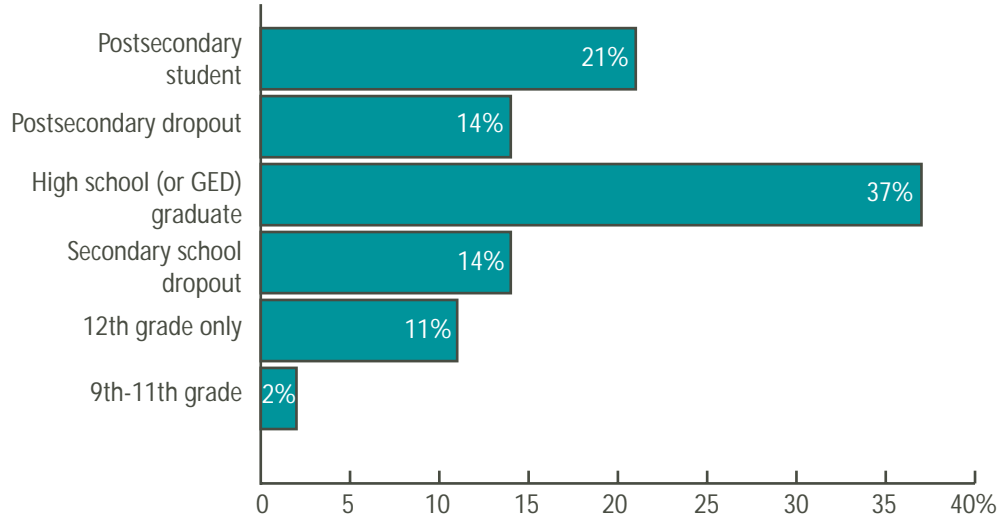
Percentages do not total 100 due to rounding.

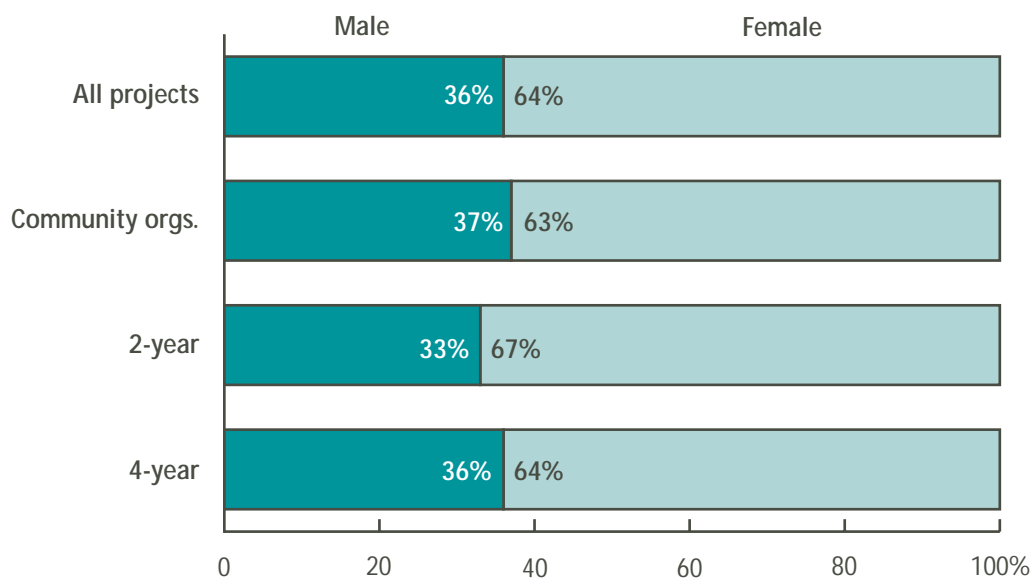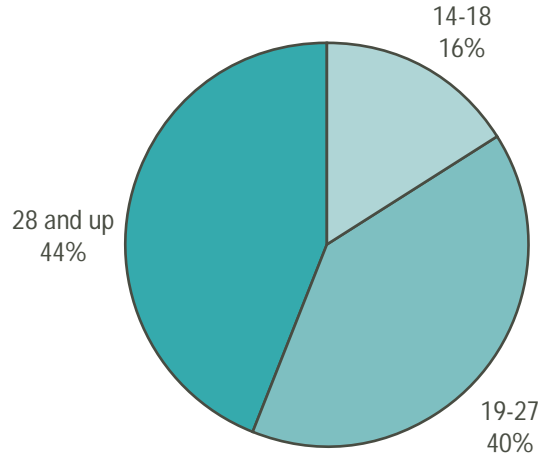*Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, EOC Performance Reports, 1998-99.*

Table 8.   **Participant distribution by grade level and type of host institution**

Grade Level	4-year	2-year	Community orgs.	All projects
Grades 9-11	2%	2%	3%	2%
12th grade only	12%	5%	13%	11%
Secondary school dropout	15%	16%	12%	14%
High school (or GED) graduate	42%	45%	28%	37%
Postsecondary dropout	11%	16%	15%	14%
Postsecondary student	17%	16%	28%	21%

Percentages do not total 100 due to rounding.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, EOC Performance Reports, 1998-99.

serve those who were already postsecondary students (28 percent) than were projects hosted by 2-year and 4-year institutions (16 percent and 17 percent, respectively).

G. Veterans served

A small percentage of EOC participants (4 percent) were veterans. Five percent of participants in the 4-year sector, 4 percent in the 2-year sector, and 3 percent in the community organizations sector were veterans.

H. Participants of limited English proficiency

Overall, 5 percent of EOC participants during the 1998-99 reporting period had limited English proficiency. Five percent of participants in the 4-year sector, 1 percent in the 2-year sector, and 7 percent in the community organizations sector had limited English proficiency.

I. Target schools

The performance report form used by both Talent Search and EOC projects asked projects to list the target schools at which the projects worked. Target schools are secondary or middle schools that the grantee designated as a focus of project services. Since only those EOC projects that chose to serve high school students will work with target schools, not all EOC projects are expected to provide these data. EOC projects work with a variety of other educational institutions and community organizations, so information on target schools provides only a partial picture of the groups with which EOC projects work. Of the 78 EOC projects providing demographic data, 34 projects, or 44 percent, submitted a list of target schools.

EOC projects listing target schools listed an average of eight schools. Projects based in 4-year colleges and in community organizations served an average of nine target schools (Figure 9). Projects based at 2-year colleges had an average of five target schools.

Figure 9. **Mean number of target schools per EOC project reporting target schools, by type of host institution**
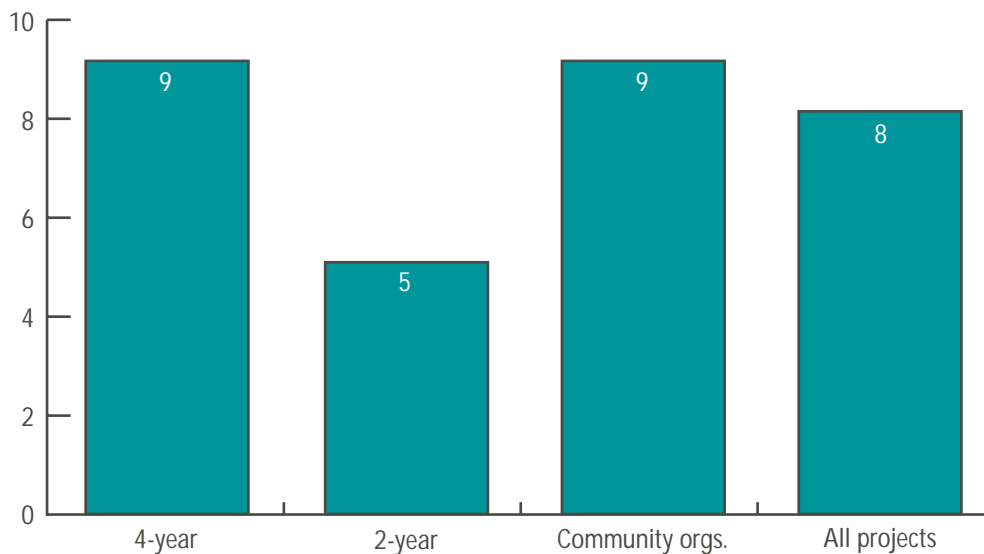
Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, EOC Performance Reports, 1998-99.

III. PROJECT SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

This section provides an overview of the types of services and activities that EOC projects provide to their participants. The performance reports asked projects to list the number of activity sessions and the number of participants who attended each of 10 activities over the 1998-99 program-year. Staff reported participants by age group—high school and adult.[3] High school participants were in grades 9 to 12 or had dropped out of high school. Any participant who had completed high school or earned a GED was considered an adult. Seventy-nine of the 82 EOC projects operating during the 1998-99 reporting year provided project services and activities data.

Table 9 highlights the percentages of projects that provided each service for the two education levels. The most common activity provided by EOC projects was counseling services. Thirty-three percent of projects provided counseling to high school students, 80 percent to adults, and 80 percent to participants overall. Academic advising, referrals to other organizations, and college orientation were also common activities. Family

Table 9.	Percentage of projects offering service to participants, by grade level: 1998-99		
	High School	**Adult**	**Overall**
Tutoring	11%	41%	41%
Assisted (computer) labs	7%	40%	40%
Test-taking & study skills development	22%	48%	48%
Counseling	33%	80%	80%
Academic advising	33%	79%	79%
Mentoring	9%	30%	30%
Cultural activities	12%	23%	26%
College orientation	27%	60%	67%
Family activities	7%	16%	16%
Referrals	21%	65%	70%

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, EOC Performance Reports, 1998-99.

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[3]Some projects included numbers for middle school participants. Because middle school participants were to be included in the annual performance report for only the Talent Search Program—not the EOC Program—the data are not included in this analysis.

activities, cultural activities, and mentoring were among the services provided by the smallest percentage of EOC projects. As expected for the EOC Program, the data also show that projects gear their activities more to adults than to high school students.

A. Academic support services

The following four services, grouped as academic support services, were defined as follows in the performance report:

- Tutoring—individual or small group tutoring provided by professional staff or students who are either part-time paid staff, volunteers, or internship-for-credit students.

- Assisted (computer) labs—academic support or tutoring provided through a learning or computer center, which may include computer-assisted instruction.

- Test-taking and study skills development—workshops, tutoring, or individual assistance specifically designed to help students develop the skills necessary to 1) succeed in academic programs, 2) meet scoring requirements on national or state standardized tests for admission into a postsecondary educational institution, or 3) pass a high school equivalency exam.

- Academic advising/course selection—assisting students in making education plans, selecting appropriate courses, meeting academic requirements, planning for high school graduation, and gaining admission to a postsecondary educational institution.

Three different methods were used to look at the extent to which services were offered to participants. The first measure indicated the percentage of all EOC participants who received a service. The second measure was the average number of sessions per project (for only those projects that undertook that service). The third measure looked at the average number of sessions per participant (for those participants engaged in that service). Projects differed in the manner in which they counted sessions, but we included these data here as an indicator of intensity rather than a measure of the number of participant contacts. This measure underestimates the actual sessions per participant. When a project provided services to a group of five people, for example, the project was instructed to count the session as one rather than five sessions.

As Table 10 shows, among academic support services, 3 percent of participants received tutoring, 4 percent attended assisted (computer) labs, 8 percent attended test-taking and study skills development sessions, and 44 percent received academic advising. On average (among those projects that provided each service), a typical EOC project provided 353 tutoring sessions, 237 assisted computer lab sessions, 152 test-taking and study skills development sessions, and 1,135 academic advising sessions in the 1998-99 program year. The average number of sessions per participant was almost three for tutoring and about one for the other three academic support services.

Table 10. **Percentage of all participants receiving academic support services, average number of sessions per project, and average number of sessions per participant: 1998-99**

	Percentage of participants receiving service	Average number of sessions per project	Average number of sessions per participant
Tutoring	3%	353	2.7
Assisted (computer) labs	4%	237	1.1
Test-taking & study skills dev.	8%	152	0.5
Academic advising	44%	1,135	1.1

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, EOC Performance Reports, 1998-99.

Figure 10. **Percentage of adult participants receiving academic support services: 1998-99**
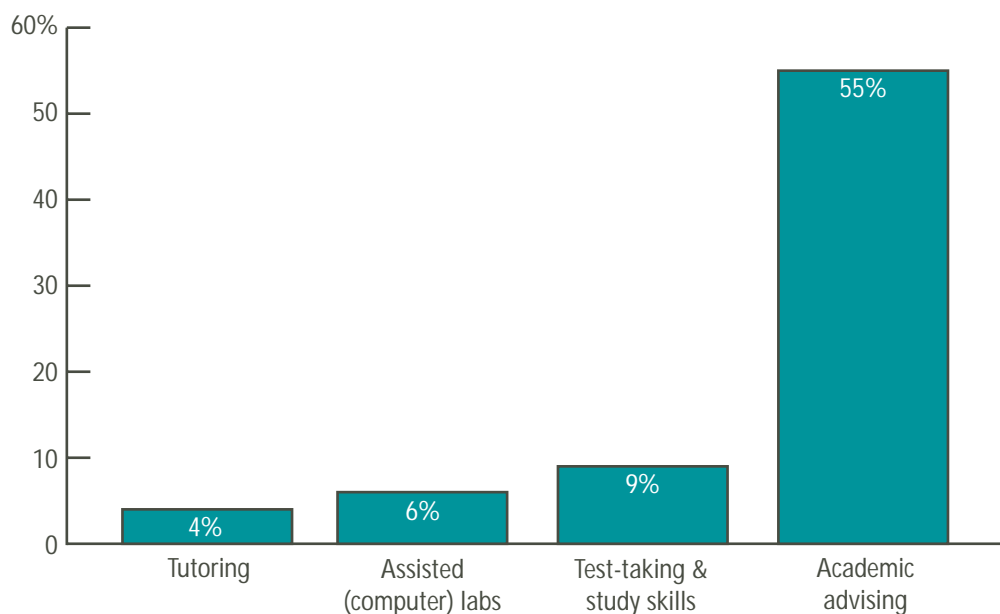
Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, EOC Performance Reports, 1998-99.

1. Adult participants

As the previous chapter notes, about 72 percent of participants were adults.[4] Figure 10 shows that 55 percent of the adult participants engaged in academic advising sessions provided by EOC projects. Nine percent of the adult participants received test-

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[4]Adults include postsecondary students and dropouts as well as high school (or GED) graduates.

taking and study skills sessions, 6 percent received assisted (computer) labs, and 4 percent received tutoring.

The typical EOC project provided adult participants with 325 tutoring sessions, 221 assisted labs, 133 test-taking and study skills development sessions, and 1,025 academic advising sessions (Table 11). The average number of sessions per adult participant ranged from almost three for tutoring to approximately one for assisted labs, test-taking and study skills development, and academic advising.

Table 11.	Average number of sessions per project providing service and average number of sessions per participant for adult participants: 1998-99	
	Average number of sessions per project	Average number of sessions per participant
Tutoring	325	2.8
Assisted (computer) labs	221	1.1
Test-taking & study skills dev.	133	0.5
Academic advising	1,025	1.1

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, EOC Performance Reports, 1998-99.

2. High school participants

As the previous chapter notes, approximately 27 percent of EOC participants are secondary school students or dropouts. Figure 11 shows that 21 percent of the high school participants received academic advising services provided by EOC projects. Eight percent of high school participants received test-taking and study skills services, and 1 percent received tutoring and assisted lab sessions.

Among those EOC projects providing such services, the average project offered high school participants 104 tutoring sessions, 89 assisted (computer) labs, 42 test-taking and study skills development sessions, and 260 academic advising sessions for the program year 1998-99 (Table 12). The typical EOC project offered nearly two tutoring sessions per high school participant and approximately one assisted lab, test-taking and study skills development session, and academic advising session.

Figure 11. **Percentage of high school participants receiving academic support services: 1998-99**
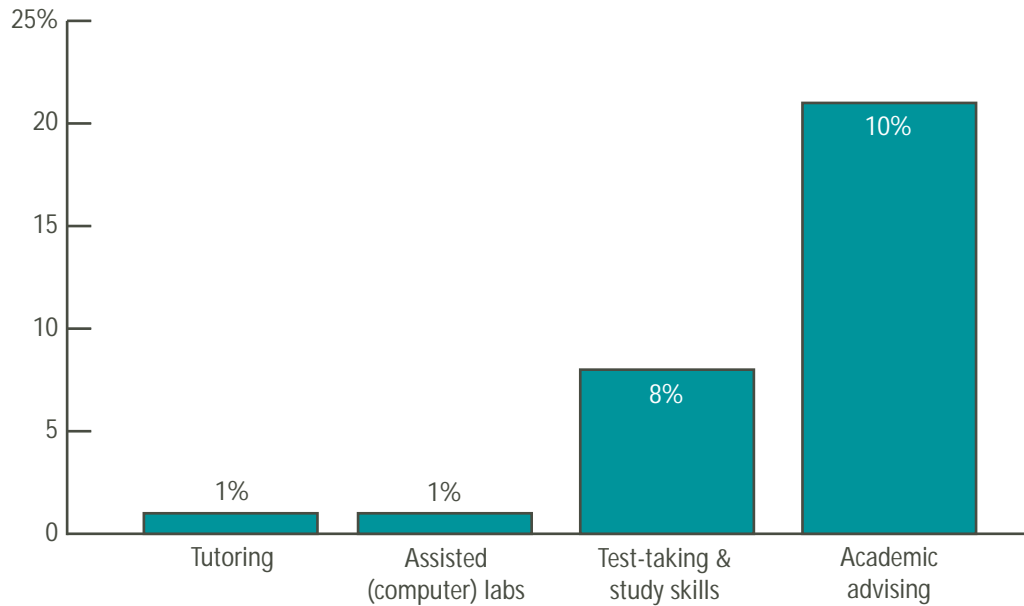
Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, EOC Performance Reports, 1998-99.

Table 12. **Average number of sessions per project providing service and average number of sessions per participant for high school participants: 1998-99**

	Average number of sessions per project	Average number of sessions per participant
Tutoring	104	1.9
Assisted (computer) labs	89	1.2
Test-taking & study skills dev.	42	0.2
Academic advising	260	0.8

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, EOC Performance Reports, 1998-99.

B. Personal and career development services

An additional six services and activities were grouped into a single category, comprising activities designed to enhance the personal and career development of EOC participants. These services, such as counseling and mentoring, often had a much broad-

er function, involving help with academic decisions in addition to personal and career-related matters. The six activities were defined as follows in the performance report:

- Counseling—assistance with personal, educational, and career decision-making.

- Mentoring—a variety of personal or academic support activities provided by other students or professionals and designed to expose project participants to careers and other educational opportunities available to them.

- Cultural activities—any project-sponsored activities, such as field trips, special lectures, and symposiums, that are intended to enrich the project participants' academic progress and personal development.

- College orientation activities—workshops, college fairs, or project-sponsored trips to other postsecondary institutions to acquaint students with a variety of postsecondary educational opportunities.

- Family activities—events, workshops, meetings, and counseling designed to provide families with information on postsecondary educational opportunities and financial aid available and to involve them in the educational decisions of their children.

- Referrals to other service providers—the formal and informal network of social service programs and community organizations, including other TRIO programs, available to help project participants.

The most popular personal and career development service among all EOC participants was counseling (62 percent, Table 13). Thirty-two percent of all participants also engaged in college orientation services and 29 percent received referrals to other service providers. Two percent of all participants received mentoring services and cultural and family activities.

Table 13. **Percentage of all participants receiving personal and career development services: 1998-99**

	Percentage of participants receiving service sessions	Average number of of sessions per project	Average number of of sessions per participant
Counseling	62%	2,290	1.6
Mentoring	2%	109	0.7
Cultural activities	2%	16	0.1
College orientation	32%	410	0.5
Family activities	2%	46	0.2
Referrals	29%	144	0.2

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, EOC Performance Reports, 1998-99.

1. Adult participants

Eighty percent of adult participants took advantage of counseling services provided by EOC projects, the highest participation rate for a personal and career development service (Figure 12). Referrals (39 percent) and college orientation services (36 percent) were also popular. Three percent of all adults participated in mentoring and family activities, and 2 percent engaged in cultural activities.

Figure 12. **Percentage of adult participants receiving personal and career development services: 1998-99**
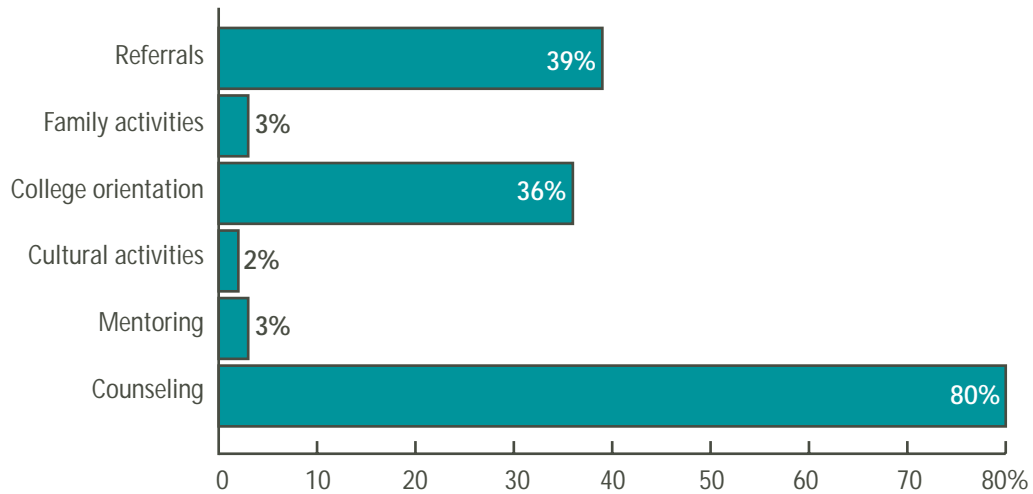
Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, EOC Performance Reports, 1998-99.

2. High school participants

Figure 13 presents participation rates for personal and career development services for high school participants. These two services attracted the highest percentage of participants: counseling, with 27 percent participation, and college orientation, with 26 percent participation. Referrals were next most popular, with 6 percent of all high school students participating. Two percent of high school participants engaged in family and cultural activities, and less than 1 percent in mentoring services.

Figure 13. **Percentage of high school participants receiving personal and career development services: 1998-99**

Service	Percentage
Referrals	6%
Family activities	2%
College orientation	26%
Cultural activities	2%
Mentoring	0%
Counseling	27%
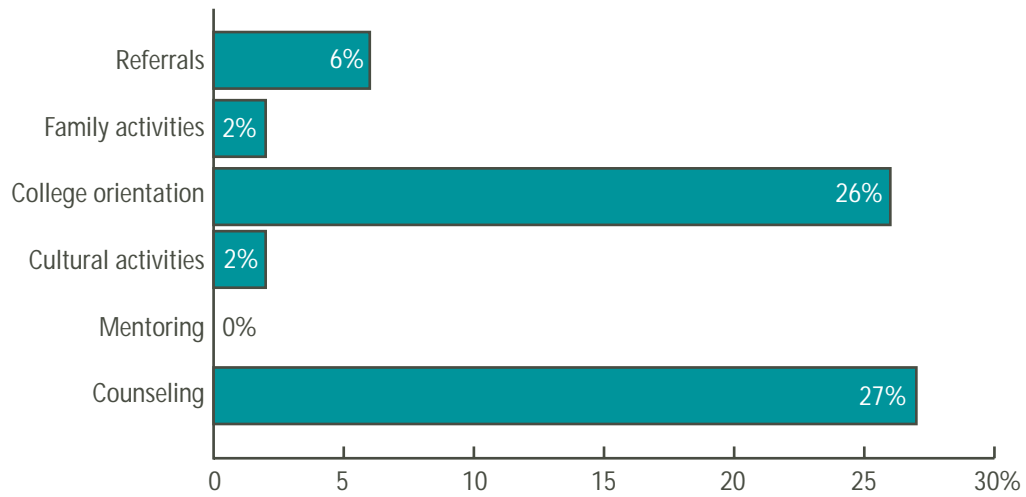
Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, EOC Performance Reports, 1998-99.

IV. PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES

In the fourth section of the performance report, grantees were asked to report on their progress in meeting the approved objectives. These objectives were outlined in a project's grant proposal and needed to relate to the goals of the EOC Program as well as respond to the prior experience criteria as described in the program regulations. The outcomes addressed admissions and financial aid for postsecondary education for college-ready participants. College-ready participants include adults, 12th grade high school students, and high school or high school equivalency graduates. The outcomes also included grade progression, retention, graduation, and reentry into high schools. Seventy-nine of the 82 EOC projects operating during 1998-99 reporting year provided valid performance outcome data.

Only EOC projects with the following types of data were included in the objective and outcome calculations: 1) the applicable population (e.g., number of high school participants); 2) objective data; and 3) outcome data. Projects missing any of these three data types were not included in the calculations. In addition, some projects reported higher numbers in the outcomes than in the applicable population counts (e.g., more students graduating high school than 12th grade participants). Thus, we capped the outcomes at the number reported in the population—so no calculation was over 100 percent.

A. Admissions and financial aid assistance

One of the aims of the EOC Program is to assist participants with the process of applying to college and obtaining financial aid, thus helping to overcome some of the barriers that economically disadvantaged students often face when pursuing post-secondary education. Program staff can offer assistance at various stages of the college application process—selecting schools to apply to, choosing appropriate courses, completing the application, and finding ways to finance a college education. EOC Program staff were asked to complete the following to assess the extent to which participants were receiving these services:

- Applied for postsecondary admission—number of participants who received help with college entrance applications and the number who applied for post-secondary admission.

- Applied for student financial aid—number of participants who received help completing financial aid forms, including scholarship applications, U.S. Department of Education federal student financial aid forms, and state applications for financial aid; and the number who applied for financial aid.

Overall, projects anticipated assisting 76 percent of participants with applying for admissions to a postsecondary institution and 79 percent with applying for financial aid (Table 14). In fact, 69 percent of college-ready EOC participants applied to postsecondary institutions and 78 percent applied for financial aid applications.

Table 14. **Comparison of approved objectives and actual achievements for assistance in applying for postsecondary admissions and financial aid: 1998-99***

Outcome	Approved Approved Objective	Actual
Assistance in applying for postsecondary admissions	76%	69%
Assistance in applying for financial aid	79%	78%

Outcome data are based on 67 projects providing complete application for admissions figures and 69 projects providing application for financial aid figures.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, EOC Performance Reports, 1998-99.

B. Postsecondary admission and reentry

Postsecondary enrollment numbers were divided into the following two groups:

- Postsecondary admissions—number of high school graduates and participants who have completed requirements to obtain a high school equivalency degree, as well as other eligible individuals who have enrolled in programs of postsecondary education for the first time during this reporting period or for the fall term.

- Postsecondary reentry—number of participants who were previously dismissed or who halted their educational progress toward a postsecondary degree, but who reenrolled in a program of postsecondary education during the reporting period or for the fall term.

As Table 15 shows, EOC project staff expected 49 percent of their eligible participants to enroll in a postsecondary institution and 46 percent of those who had previously dropped out of college to reenroll. According to 1998-99 performance data, 51 percent of eligible participants were admitted to postsecondary institutions, and 56 percent of postsecondary dropouts had reenrolled.

C. Postsecondary placement

In addition to recording the number of participants who enrolled or reenrolled in a postsecondary institution, EOC projects provided information on the types of institutions that admitted participants (Figure 14). Of all EOC participants who were admitted to college, 80 percent were admitted to a public institution (54 percent to a public 2-year institution and 26 percent to a public 4-year institution). Thirteen percent were accepted at a public or nonprofit vocational or technical school, and

Table 15. **Comparison of approved objectives and actual achievements for postsecondary admissions and postsecondary reentry: 1998-99***

Outcome	Approved Approved Objective	Actual
Assistance in applying for postsecondary admissions	49%	51%
Assistance in applying for financial aid	46%	56%

Outcome data are based on the 65 projects providing complete admissions figures and the 55 providing reentry figures.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, EOC Performance Reports, 1998-99.

Figure 14. **Postsecondary placement of participants for EOC overall: 1998-99**
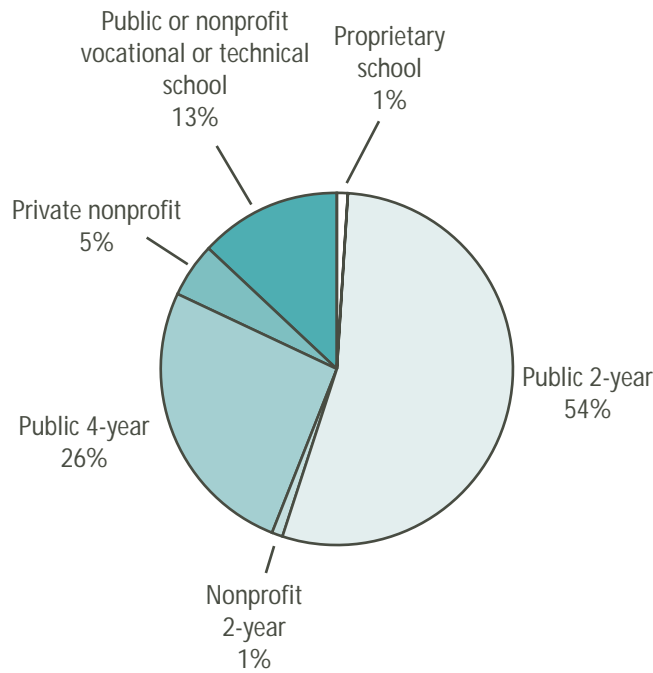
Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, EOC Performance Reports, 1998-99.

5 percent at a private nonprofit 4-year college. One percent each were admitted to a proprietary school or a nonprofit 2-year institution.

As Table 16 shows, participants at EOC projects with a 2-year college as the host were more likely to be admitted to a 2-year school (73 percent) than overall (55 percent). Participants at projects with 4-year colleges and community organizations as hosts had a higher percentage of participants accepted at 4-year institutions than did 2-year college hosts.

Table 16. Distribution of postsecondary placement of participants by sector: 1998-99

	4-year college	2-year college	Community orgs.	All projects
Admitted to:				
Public 2-year school	45%	73%	48%	54%
Nonprofit 2-year school	2%	0%	1%	1%
Public 4-year school	29%	11%	33%	26%
Private nonprofit 4-year school	6%	4%	5%	5%
Public or nonprofit vocational or technical school	16%	10%	11%	13%
Proprietary school	2%	1%	1%	1%

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, EOC Performance Reports, 1998-99.

D. Secondary school retention, graduation, and reentry

Secondary school retention, graduation, and reentry were defined as follows in the instructions provided to projects with the performance report form:

- Secondary school retention—all secondary students who will continue in high school for the next academic term.

- Secondary school graduation—all high school seniors (and GED students or alternative education students) who received a high school diploma or completed a high school equivalency program during the reporting period.

- Secondary school reentry—all secondary school dropouts who reentered high school or enrolled in a high school equivalency program during the reporting period.

As Table 17 shows, EOC projects expected 55 percent of high school students in grades 9 through 11 to remain in school, 58 percent of high school seniors to graduate, and 51 percent of secondary school dropouts to reenroll. For the 1998–99 program year, 86 percent of applicable high school students remained in school, 93 percent of high school seniors graduated, and 35 percent of high school dropouts reenrolled.

Table 17. Comparison of approved objectives and actual achievements for secondary school outcomes: 1998-99*

Outcome	Approved Objective	Actual
Secondary school retention	55%	86%
Secondary school graduation	58%	93%
Secondary school reentry	51%	35%

*Outcome data are based on eight projects providing complete retention figures, 13 providing graduation figures, and 18 providing reentry figures.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, EOC Performance Reports, 1998-99.

V. DATA ISSUES AND FUTURE PLANS

The following section highlights data issues, response rates, and possible future modifications to the EOC performance report. In the performance reports, the rate of completion on individual data items and sections varied greatly (Table 18).

All demographic items, with the exception of target schools and participants with limited English proficiency, had response rates of 100 percent. Response rates for outcome items were not as high as those for demographic items.[5] The response rates for items in the services section could not be determined from the given data. In this section, projects were given a list of 10 services on which to report data. They were asked to list the number of sessions they provided during the performance period and the number of participants served through each activity. Because not all projects provided all 10 services, it was not possible to determine whether a field was left blank because that particular service was never provided or because the project did not have the information on hand.

An additional difficulty in interpreting the services data was the lack of clarity about how the numbers of sessions and participants for a given service were calculated. The instructions on the performance report stated that "the number of sessions, activities, events, and organizations categories should reflect the total number of these provided. For example, the project may have conducted 50 tutoring sessions for 15 adults. Thus, under the 'Tutoring' column, the project should indicate No. of Sessions—50, No. of Participants—15." In the given example, it is not clear whether each of the 15 participants attended 50 group sessions, or whether 50 individual sessions were held and split among 15 students.

Some additional data issues were as follows:

- The total numbers of participants did not always add up across some of the sections. For example, the total number provided in the participant distribution by eligibility section did not always equal the total from the participant distribution by age.

- When a field was left blank, we could not determine whether the field was not applicable or the data item was missing.

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[5]EOC projects are required to submit data only on secondary school outcomes if they are applicable to the project site. Since not all EOC projects serve high school students, a lower response rate for secondary school outcomes is expected.

Some data quality issues remain to be addressed. The U.S. Department of Education has already added edit checks to the Web-based application to require the totals in each part of Section II of the report to add up to the total number served. The results of this change should be immediately apparent in the 1999-2000 performance data. The Department will continue to clarify the directions for completing the reports and to make revisions based on feedback from the project staff concerning the report form and instructions.

Table 18.   Section/item response rates: 1998-99

Section/Item	Response Rate
Number of participants assisted	100%
Participant distribution by eligibility	100%
Participant distribution by ethnic background	100%
Participant distribution by gender	100%
Participant distribution by age	100%
Veterans served	100%
Participants of limited English proficiency	95%
Target schools	44%
Approved objectives:	
Secondary school retention	11%
Secondary school graduation	19%
Secondary school reentry	27%
Assistance in applying for postsecondary admissions	86%
Assistance in applying for student financial aid	89%
Postsecondary admissions	84%
Postsecondary reentry	71%
Participant status at the end of the reporting period:	
Continued in high school	66%
Received high school diploma	71%
Obtained a GED/high school equivalency degree	72%
Applied for admission to programs of postsecondary education	91%
Applied for student financial aid for postsecondary education	91%
Admitted to (or enrolled in) a program of postsecondary education	84%
Re-enrolled in a program of postsecondary education	71%
Dropped out of high school	80%
Other	85%
Unknown	86%
Postsecondary placements (types of institutions)	92%–99%

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal TRIO Programs, EOC Performance Reports, 1998-99.